



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

February 29, 2000

S. 1167

A bill to amend the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act to provide for expanding the scope of the Independent Scientific Review Panel

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
on February 10, 2000*

S. 1167 would amend the Northwest Power Act to expand the authority of the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP) to allow review of certain federal projects designed to mitigate the damage to fish populations caused by the operation of hydroelectric projects in the northwestern United States. Currently, the ISRP only reviews projects that are directly funded by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). Under the bill, the ISRP would review and make recommendations on projects undertaken by the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, and other federal agencies whose costs are reimbursed by BPA.

CBO estimates that enacting this bill would have no significant impact on the federal budget. Currently, BPA can spend up to \$500,000 a year (in 1997 dollars) to pay for costs incurred by members of the ISRP. The bill would increase that limit to \$750,000 a year (in 1997 dollars) to reimburse costs associated with the ISRP's increased responsibilities.

Because enactment of S. 1167 would affect direct spending, pay-as-you-go procedures would apply; however, we estimate that any additional net direct spending would be less than \$250,000 annually. This bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would have no impact on the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact is Lisa Cash Driskill. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.